BC's Freshwater Recreational Fishery

Setting Direction For The Future

Consultation Report

Prepared By:
Joint Government – Sector Steering Committee
May 2002

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May 13, 2002

Freshwater Fishing Strategy Steering Committee

Dear Committee Members:

Please accept my gratitude for the work and dedication of the steering committee in developing the Freshwater Fishing Strategy.

The collaborative work of angling organizations, independent anglers, government agencies and First Nations is an excellent example of a public – private partnership, and an example which I look forward to being repeated on other initiatives in the future.

The background work contained in the Context Report and the Consultation Report provide a thorough compendium of information about freshwater fishing which supports fisheries management efforts.

I can assure you that the strategy will be considered in the evolution of freshwater fisheries management in British Columbia. Although the strategy was not informed by internal discussions about the fisheries management mandate and resources included in the Ministry Service Plan, I can assure you that the strategy will be considered as the Service Plan is implemented.

Again, congratulations and thank you for your efforts in bringing this significant work to conclusion. I look forward to continuing to work with the steering committee members in the future.

Best regards,

Joyce Murray
Minister

Preface

This document is the product of Joint Government – Sector process, which provided for input from all interests within the freshwater recreational fishing sector. This report, the 'Consultation Report,' provides a summary of input received during the consultation portion of this process. The responses and comments summarized in this report reflect the opinions of those who completed questionnaires and/or attended open house sessions.

A Joint Government – Sector Steering Committee was formed to consolidate the input and information to develop the Strategy. The committee consisted of the following government agencies and organizations related to sport fishing:

- British Columbia Wildlife Federation
- British Columbia Federation of Fly Fishers
- British Columbia Federation of Drift Fishers
- British Columbia Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association
- Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia
- Guide Outfitters Association of British Columbia
- Trout Unlimited Canada – British Columbia
- Representative of the retailers and wholesalers of fishing equipment
- Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
- Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management
- Tourism BC
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- British Columbia Assets and Land Corporation

The British Columbia Aboriginal Fisheries Commission participated as observers at the Steering Committee level and provided input throughout the process.

Two other documents produced by the Steering Committee include:

- **Context Report**, which documents the current status of the freshwater recreational fishing sector; and,
- **Joint Government-Sector Strategy and Action Plan.**

The Strategy and Action Plan is a blueprint for government and the sector to continue to work together to help shape and set direction for the freshwater recreational fishery of British Columbia. It recognizes the key issues of the fishery and identifies goals, objectives and specific actions to address these issues.

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1. Introduction

A joint government-sector partnership has been established to develop a vision and strategy for the freshwater, or inland recreational fishery. The Strategy will be a blueprint for government and the sector to work together to help shape and set direction for the fishery. British Columbia's Fisheries Renewal has provided the funding for this initiative.

The objectives of the initiative are to:

- Set out a common, shared vision for the freshwater recreational fishery;
- State key strategic objectives to achieve the vision; and,
- Provide a clear action plan that identifies: priorities; associated supporting activities and strategic partnerships.

Consultation with the freshwater recreational sport fishing sector, the provincial government, regional and local governments, and the federal government is a key step in the process leading to the development of the Strategy. The British Columbia Aboriginal Fisheries Commission participated as observers at the Steering Committee level. First Nations people were also encouraged to participate as observers at the regional level so they could become more informed and aware of sport fishing issues within their region. To date, the following initiatives have been taken to obtain input from these groups:

- ***Six Working Groups*** comprised of government and sector representatives from various regions of the province were established. These groups have met to identify their ideas and concerns regarding the future direction of the fishery.
- ***Twelve Open-House Sessions*** were held throughout the province to provide information on the fishery. Attendees were invited to provide input by completing a survey.
- ***A Website*** was created to keep the sport fishing sector informed of the initiative, enable this group to obtain the information presented at the open-house sessions and provide input by completing a survey.
- A ***Toll-Free Phone Line*** was established to provide those individuals without Internet access to obtain the information presented at the open-house sessions and provide input by completing a survey.

This report provides a synopsis of the input received from the open-house sessions, the website and the toll-free phone line. It is important to note that that this report reflects the input of those individuals who participated in the consultation process.

It is also important to note that the consultation process was designed to identify which values are important to the fishery, what areas are of concern and what can be done to improve on the fishery. As the intent of this report is to accurately present the input received from the consultation program in order to provide a comprehensive reference tool for the preparation of the Strategy, conclusions have not been drawn.

The next steps will be to:

- Meet with Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks Regional Staff to identify options for the future;
- Meet with the Joint Government-Sector Steering Committee to formulate a draft framework for the strategy;
- Review the draft framework with the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks Regional Staff and Working Groups; and
- Prepare the Final Draft Strategy with the Steering Committee and government representatives.

A list of agencies and organizations represented by the Joint Government -Sector Steering Committee is provided in the Preface of this document.

Open House Sessions

The locations for the 12 open house sessions were established by the Steering Committee. In selecting these locations, the Steering Committee chose communities central to all regions of the province. It was a challenge for the committee to ensure that all regions were represented within a limited number of sessions. To address this limitation, a website and toll-free number were established so that individuals unable to attend an open house could provide input to the process.

Open House Participation

6%	Surrey
10%	Abbotsford
9%	Duncan
11%	Campbell River
13%	Kelowna
15%	Kamloops
3%	Castlegar
7%	Cranbrook
5%	Williams Lake
11%	Prince George
6%	Terrace
5%	Smithers
322	Total Participants

When they came to the open houses, which were held from 3 pm to 9 pm, participants received handout information, a survey and three self-sticking dots. The handout provided background on the initiative, gave the status of the sport fishing sector and listed the preliminary areas of focus for the Strategy (Annex A).

Information on the fishery was provided on 18 display panels (Annex B). The eight key areas identified by the Steering Committee that the Strategy will address were outlined on two panels. Participants were requested to 'vote' by placing the self-sticking dots next to the three areas most important to them.

The survey was divided into the following three sections:

- ***Respondent Background*** included questions on origin, level of involvement with the fishery and fishing participation in the last year;
- ***Setting Direction*** asked respondents to rank the level of importance of 19 focus areas for the Strategy; and,
- ***Comments*** included open-ended questions for respondents to share their concerns about the fishery and its future direction.

In total, 322 individuals attended the open-house sessions. On average, individuals attended for about an hour; however, visits varied from a quick drop-in to pick up the information to several hours. In most cases, attendees took the time to review the material and complete the survey.

Individuals who could not attend an open-house participated through the website or toll-free number and received the open-house handout and survey. The open-house panels were also posted on the website. At total of 376 people completed the survey through the web site or tell-free number.

Reporting The Survey Results

The survey data was very comprehensive, thereby enabling a variety of analyses. The data analysis included is categorized by:

697 Completed Surveys:
321 Open House
361 Website
15 Toll Free Phone

- Respondent origin – broken out by eight provincial regions and non-residents;
- Involvement within the fishery – recreational angler, sport fishing business and other; and,
- Fishing activity in British Columbia during 2000 –fished only in rivers, fished only on lakes, fished in rivers and on lakes, and did not freshwater fish during 2000.

For ease of reporting, the survey results provided on the following pages are presented in table format for the total sample. Differences that occurred with one or more of the above data runs are noted in point form.

2. Profile of the Respondents

Where the Respondents Live

Almost all of the respondents were British Columbians; only 1% resided outside of the province. The Skeena and Cariboo/Chilcotin regions are represented by a small sample size.

Region	# Respondents	% Total Respondents
Lower Mainland	164	23.5%
Vancouver Island	95	13.6%
Okanagan	119	17.1%
Thompson Nicola	98	14.1%
Kootenay	75	10.8%
Cariboo/Chilcotin	31	4.4%
Peace/Omineca	55	7.9%
Skeena	33	4.7%
British Columbia resident, region not noted	17	2.4%
Non-Resident	10	1.4%
Total	697	100%

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing Consultation

Involvement with the Sport Fishing Sector

The respondents represent the diversity of the freshwater recreational fishery. Almost all of them are recreational anglers. In addition, one in five are involved with businesses that derive revenue from sport fishing activity. Fewer than one in three are members of sport fishing organizations.

Involvement with Fishery	% of Total Respondents
Recreational angler	94.0%
Member of sport fishing organization	24.8%
Involved with tourism businesses which cater to sport fishing	10.6%
Involved with sport fishing supply company	5.2%
Government representative	2.6%
Other	7.3%

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing Consultation

On a regional basis more than one-third of the Omineca/Peace and Vancouver Island respondents and one quarter of the Cariboo/Chilcotin respondents were involved with sport fishing related businesses.

3. Sport Fishing Activity in 2000

Of the respondents, 95% fished in the freshwaters of British Columbia in 2000. Of the remaining 5% of the respondents, only 2% fished in tidal waters, and 3% did not fish during 2000.

Of the respondents who fished in freshwater, more than one-half fished both on lakes and in rivers, and only one in five fished on lakes. Of the total respondents who fished in 2000, 28% also fished in tidal waters.

Freshwater Fishing Activity in 2000	% Of Total Respondents
Fished on lakes and in rivers	59.8%
Fished only on lakes	24.1%
Fished only in rivers	8.6%
Did not freshwater fish	7.5%

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing Consultation

On a regional basis:

- In the Skeena Region, 30% of respondents fished only in rivers in 2000.
- Vancouver Island and Lower Mainland respondents more often fished only in rivers, or a combination of in rivers and on lakes.
- Of the respondents, 51% of those from Thompson Nicola and 36% of those from Okanagan fished only on lakes in 2000.
- 87% of the Omineca/Peace and 76% of the Kootenay respondents fished both rivers and lakes.

Average Number of Days Fished

For the most part, those respondents who fished in 2000 were very avid anglers, as indicated in the following table and by comparison to 1995 data, which indicated that the British Columbia resident spent an average of 17.9 days freshwater fishing (National Recreational Fishing Survey). In 2000, the number of days fished was as high as 250 days for river fishing and 180 days for lake fishing.

Type of Fishing Activity in 2000	Average Number of Days River Fishing	Average Number of Days Lake Fishing	Average Number of Days Tidal Fishing
Fished only in rivers	46.9	0.0	13.9
Fished only on lakes	0.0	27.9	8.2
Fished in rivers and on lakes	22.5	23.5	17.1
Did not freshwater fish	0.0	0.0	59.4
All respondents who fished in 2000	25.5	23.9	16.9

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing Consultation

On a regional basis:

- The average number of days spent river fishing was higher for respondents from the Skeena (45.3 days on average), Vancouver Island (32.6 days on average) and Lower Mainland (31.4 days on average) regions.
- Respondents from Thompson Nicola spent an average of 34.4 days lake fishing in 2000.

Use of Sport Fishing Infrastructure

A total of 333 respondents (48% of the total respondents) indicated they had purchased one or more sport fishing services in 2000 while fishing in British Columbia. The most common items purchased by these respondents included an overnight stay at a freshwater fishing lodge, use of a boat ramp and services of a freshwater fishing guide.

Sport Fishing Service Purchased in 2000	% Of Respondents who Answered Question
Overnight at freshwater lodge	46%
Boat ramp	36%
Freshwater fishing guide	30%
Boat rental	21%
Marina	17%
Overnight at saltwater Lodge	12%
Saltwater fishing guide	12%
Total respondents who purchased services	333

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing consultation

The 2000 Fishing Experience

Respondents were asked to comment on their freshwater fishing activity in 2000. More than one-half (54%) of the respondents provided comments. The comments

reflect a full range of experience, from a great fishing trip to a poor one, and many remarks were made on how the fishery is changing.

A total of 119 respondents reported that it was a good year (great, good and better than last year), and 63 respondents noted that fishing was down over last year (poor year, stocks in decline, fish smaller). The remaining comments focused on different aspects of the experience, such as crowding, angler ethics, etc. The results are provided in the following table.

General Description of Comment	# Comments
Great fishing, absolutely world class	69
Good year for fishing, had a good time	34
Gets better each year	24
Stocks are in decline, did not catch as many fish this year	35
Poor fishing this year, fish were smaller this year	26
Overcrowded, crowding increased over last year	62
There was a lack of enforcement, did not see a Conservation Officer	43
Evidence of illegal fishing, people are not respecting the regulations	27
Anglers are not practicing good ethics, not respective of one another, leave garbage, etc.	25
Too many boats, jet boats, spoiled the experience for me	21
Not able to access my fishing site because private owners refusing access and/or the deactivation of logging roads.	11
For other personal reasons, I was unable to get out and fish as much this year	26
Range of comments on changes to regulations (see next Section for detail)	28
Other	19
Total Comments[1]	457
Total Number of Respondents who Answered this Question	325

[1] *Total number of comments exceeds the number of respondents who answered this question because of multiple responses*
Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing Consultation

Reviewing the comments by region and type of fishing (river, lake or both), the following differences were found:

- A higher portion of respondents who fished only in rivers stated that crowding was on the increase;
- Fewer of the respondents who fished only on lakes noted that crowding was on the increase;
- On a regional basis, a higher portion of Kootenay and Skeena respondents felt that crowding was on the increase; and
- A higher portion of Vancouver Island and Okanagan respondents indicated fishing was better this year, yet a higher portion of Vancouver Island respondents noted that the quantity of fish has declined over the previous year.

4. Setting Direction

A key objective of the Consultation Program was to identify priorities for the future direction of the freshwater recreational fishery. This information will be an important reference tool for drafting the Framework for the Strategy. Open house participants were asked to indicate their three highest priorities on a panel that listed eight general areas of focus. The survey was then used as a means for participants to assess these general areas in more detail.

Results From Open House 'Dot-Voting Exercise'

Each attendee was given three dots to vote on those areas believed to be most important for the Strategy. The results are listed in the following table and provide an indication of top-of-mind concerns expressed by those who attended the open-house sessions.

General Focus Area	Number of Votes
Addressing the Requirement for Conservation	266
• *Conservation is first, last, always. If there are no fish, there is no fishery*	
• *Address the need for habitat management, protection and enhancement*	
Enhancing the Quality of the Experience	237
• *Ensure healthy fish stocks – enhancement and habitat protection*	
• *Maintain wild fish stocks*	
• *Maintain the natural setting*	
Enhancing the Quantity of the Experience	206
• *Provide enough fish to sustain recreational demand and encourage growth in the sector*	
• *Improved, and increased access to fishing locations*	
Addressing the Government Mandate	95
• *Meeting the needs for more information on the fish resource and fishery*	
• *Improve client services, i.e. licensing and enforcement*	
• *Clear government accountability and adequate funding*	
Land and Water Resource Use Management	88
• *Recreational fishing values must be considered in land and resource use planning processes*	
• *In absence of credible data apply caution*	
Creating Economic Development	52
• *Develop stronger economic growth related to recreational fishing and ensure that benefits flow to local areas*	
• *Support communities in their efforts to increase benefits from sport fishing activities*	
• *Create opportunities to develop new and emerging markets, including new non-resident markets and BC resident markets such as family fishing*	
Recognition and Cooperation	27
• *The social, cultural and economic value of the recreational fishery is fully understood and supported by government and the public*	
• *Coordination between government and sector on fishery issues*	
• *Effective, funded and affordable consultation*	
Enhancing the Expectation and Opportunity	25
• *Support a diversity of fishing experiences throughout the province*	
• *Support year round opportunities to fish*	

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing consultation

Survey Results

The survey listed 19 areas of focus for the Strategy. The respondents were asked to rank the importance of each of these areas using a four-point scale where 4=very important, 3=important, 2=somewhat important and 1=not important. Responses are presented in two formats. The first is a weighted average (a value closer to 4 indicates a higher level of importance). The second provides the percentages of respondents who indicated very important and important for each area of focus.

Areas of Focus For Strategic Plan	Weighted Average	%Very Important	% Important
Maintain wild fish stocks	3.75	78.0%	18.8%
Enhance habitat management and protection	3.70	74.7%	20.4%
Enhance fish conservation	3.68	72.3%	23.2%
Support habitat enhancement/restoration	3.68	71.8%	23.6%
Maintain the natural setting	3.61	68.0%	25.5%
Recognition of the value and importance of the fishery by government and public	3.50	59.9%	30.3%
Clear government accountability and adequate funding	3.43	55.1%	30.9%
Consideration of sport fishing values at all land use planning processes	3.41	54.0%	32.4%
Maintain an abundance of fish to sustain recreational demand	3.33	52.2%	30.9%
Coordination between government and sector on fishery issues	3.36	48.2%	38.5%
Improve client services, i.e. licensing and enforcement	3.10	41.0%	32.7%
Effective, funded and affordable consultation with sector	3.07	30.1%	45.8%
Support communities in their efforts to increase benefits from sport fishery	2.81	27.4%	35.3%
Support a diversity of fishing experiences	2.88	27.1%	37.0%
Increase the information base on the fish resource and fishery	2.81	26.0%	35.2%
Support year round fishing opportunities	2.57	24.7%	25.9%
Develop stronger economic growth from the sport fishery	2.66	23.1%	32.7%
Provide for improved and increased access to fishing locations	2.15	17.7%	15.6%
Create opportunities for new and emerging markets	2.35	15.4%	24.4%

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing consultation

All of the 19 focus areas received a weighted average of greater than two, which indicates the respondents felt all of them were important to some degree. The top priorities were:

- Maintain wild fish stocks;
- Enhance habitat management and protection;
- Enhance fish conservation;
- Support habitat enhancement/restoration;
- Maintain the natural setting; and
- Recognition of the value and importance of the fishery by government and public.

On a regional basis, the top priorities did not differ; however, some regions placed a greater emphasis of importance on specific areas, as follows:

- Lower Mainland — maintain wild fish stocks, maintain natural setting and support year round fishing opportunities.
- Vancouver Island — support year round fishing opportunities and support communities to increase benefits from fishery.
- Thompson Nicola and Kootenay — effective, funded and affordable consultation with sector.
- Cariboo/Chilcotin — support a diversity of fishing experiences and effective, funded and affordable consultation with sector.
- Peace/Omineca — provide for improved and increased access to fishing locations and create opportunities got new and emerging markets.
- Skeena — support year round fishing opportunities and maintain an abundance of fish.

Almost all (90%) of the respondents who fished only in rivers in 2000 felt that it is very important to maintain wild fish stocks. More than 80% of these respondents also ranked fish conservation, habitat management, protection, habitat enhancement and restoration, and the maintenance of the natural setting as very important. This was the only group that placed such a high emphasis on the fish resource and its setting.

These anglers also placed more emphasis on supporting year-round fishing opportunities, whereas the respondents that fished only on lakes placed less emphasis on year-round fishing.

Those respondents who are involved with sport fishing businesses placed a greater emphasis on improving the coordination between government and the sector, as well as on those areas related to the diversity of the fishery and economic growth of the sector, including:

- Providing support to communities;
- Increasing information;
- Creating opportunities for new markets;
- Providing a diversity of fishing experiences, and;
- Providing year-round fishing opportunities

Comments on the Steps that Need to be Taken

The respondents were asked to comment on what needed to be done to improve the fishery. Of the 697 respondents, 557, or 80%, provided comments. For most surveys, typically less than 30% of the total respondents will fill in open-ended questions. The response rate of 80% indicates the high level of concern that the respondents have for the fishery and the dedication to ensuring its future. In addition, most respondents provided more than one comment.

The results provided below reflect more than 1,552 individual comments. These comments were sorted into ten categories and only those statements that were noted by 10 or more respondents are listed under the main comment category.

Setting Direction for the Future – Respondents Comments – What Steps Need to be Taken

Total Number of Comments in Category	Listing of Main Comment Categories and Common Statements (10 or more respondents). *Common statements are listed in descending order of frequency within each category (number in brackets indicates total number of respondents who mentioned comment)*
384	**Increase/improve stocks**
	Protect, restore and enhance habitat (92) Stock lakes (86) Support wild stocks (32) Eliminate ice/winter fishing to protect the stocks (31) Support fish conservation (20) Support steelhead (17)
255	**Provide for full a range of fishing experiences**
	Promote and support catch and release (69) Create more family fishing days, promote family fishing, get children involved (29) Barbless hooks only, single barbs (27) More fly fishing only (24) Ban bait, reduce its use (25) Support the commercial aspect of the fishery (18) Increase the number of remote lakes where access is restricted, i.e. walk in lakes, etc. (15) Allow increase in retention (12)
194	**Increase enforcement**
	Increase the number of enforcement staff (168) Institute more severe penalties (26)
155	**Increase support to government**
	Increase funding, monies collected from fees allocated to fishery, increase staff (59) Increase information (30) Work together for a common vision, effective management plans, create a plan for the region (33) Recognize the value of fishing (10) Consolidate ministries (10)
137	**Address impact of other users on resource**
	Address issues related to First Nations and food fishery (38) Clean up the streams, improve water quality and quantity (37) Reduce impacts of commercial fishery on fish resource (25) Reduce impacts of forestry, make industry more accountable (12) Reduce impacts of human development on shoreline, sewage, water use, etc (8)
112	**Address the issue of crowding**
	Reduce number of guides/guide days, require further training (42) Reduce number of nonresident anglers, stricter regulations for nonresident, higher fees (30) Require non-residents to use a fishing guide (13)
103	**Regulations improve and/or revise**
	Tighten regulations, lower limits, impose size limits on lakes (72) Make regulations easier to understand, make it less cumbersome (20)

Continued on next page.

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing consultation

Setting Direction For The Future – Respondents Comments Continued	
#Comments	**Listing of Main Comment Categories and Common Statements (10 or more respondents).**
	Common statements are listed in descending order of frequency within each category (number in brackets indicates total number of respondents who mentioned comment)
87	**Improve angler ethics**
	Educate anglers re respect for the environment & resource (22) Educate anglers on how to properly do catch and release (22) Educate anglers on regulations (21)
72	**Make fishing more accessible**
	Do not allow private land owners to restrict access (22) Improve ease of access to sites — easy access by car, good boat launch that's easy to use (14)
52	**Improve the fishing experience**
	Address the issue of motorboats — reduce engine size, make them electric only (45)

Source: Survey responses of participants to the Freshwater Recreational Fishing consultation

Steps to be taken at the Community Level

Just under two-thirds (59.9%) of the respondents indicated their community is involved with the freshwater sport fishing sector. More than one-half of the respondents (253) provided comments on how their community could be better involved with the fishery.

# Comments	Comments
68	Increase awareness of importance of fishery through media
38	Educate children through the school system, get then involved with stream restoration
35	Support commercial business — fair taxes, fees, promotion
34	Encourage people to get involved — clubs, meetings etc, to participate in stream restoration
30	Improve consultation, involve residents in making decisions for the fishery
27	Increase information on where to fish — signage, maps, movies, web
22	Develop local or regional water resource plans, or fish plans, to set direction for fishery, and share them with other resource users so they can be incorporated into planning
22	Do not promote or develop any more
18	Create fishing destinations close to home to encourage new anglers, or people that have difficulty accessing sites (107)
14	Support local governments in their efforts to minimize the impact of development and its water-resource use — provide assistance and expertise
14	Create economic benefits through events
13	Get clubs to partner with government agencies – i.e. Fisheries Renewal
10	Build boat ramps to make fishing more accessible within the area
9	Make better use of our hatchery, education, stocking

Next Steps

The next step in the initiative is to prepare a draft Framework for the Strategy. This will include draft goals and objectives. Meetings will be held with the Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks Regional staff and the Steering Committee to prepare the draft Framework. The Working Groups will then review the Draft Framework. The final draft Strategy, which will include the Framework and action items, will be circulated for review and comment before it is endorsed by the agencies and organizations represented by the Steering Committee.

Annex A: Open House Handout Materials

SETTING NEW DIRECTIONS FOR THE FRESHWATER RECREATIONAL FISHERY

YOU HAVE ALSO RECEIVED A COPY OF A QUESTIONNAIRE.
WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE OPEN HOUSE.
IT IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO COMMUNICATE YOUR PRIORITIES AND IDEAS ABOUT THE FRESHWATER RECREATIONAL FISHERY.
YOUR INPUT IS VITAL TO THIS INITIATIVE.

KEEP INFORMED – CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: www.bcsportfishing.org

Overview

British Columbia offers a diversity of recreational fishing experiences on its thousands of lakes, rivers and streams. In the global marketplace, BC's recreational fishing products attract the attention of those seeking a combination of BC's natural setting and the thrill of catching a variety of fish species. Resident and non-resident anglers share an interest in the experiences BC has to offer. They also share in a desire to protect the experience and resource for the future. An overwhelming theme running through the recreational sector is to ensure that 'fish come first'. All anglers and sport fishing businesses want to work in co-operation with those who manage the fisheries to ensure a future for fish as well as the experiences and livelihoods those fish provide.

Every year an average of 381,000 anglers[1] seek more than 24 species of fish in British Columbia's often-impressive natural settings that surround over 200,000 lakes and close to 800,000 km of streams. These freshwater anglers generated $494 million in expenditures and $99 million in government revenues in 1995[2]. These 1995 expenditures represent a 59% increase over 1985. A component of these expenditures – Sport Fishing packages has increased 117% over the same time period.

Unlike the commercial sector, economic stability of the recreational fishery is not totally dependent on numbers of fish harvested. Instead, the critical factor is maintaining the fishing experience. To be viable, the sport fishery must provide anglers with an opportunity to go fishing, with an expectation of catching some fish and a variety of natural settings in which to enjoy the fishing experience. In addition, the fishing experience means different things to different anglers in terms of the species pursued, fishing techniques and location.

The ability to maintain the fishing experience requires innovative management from government in partnership with anglers and sport fishing businesses. The Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries – BC Fisheries is responsible for fisheries management. The BC Fisheries Director is delegated authority to vary quotas, size restrictions and gear restrictions for all species in freshwater except Pacific salmon. The latter falls under the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks is responsible for habitat protection and regional delivery of programs. Local governments, which are enabled by Ministry of Municipal Affairs legislation, can also have significant effects on fish, particularly on habitat. The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture and British Columbia Assets and Land each play a role in advancing specific public interests affecting the sector.

The sector itself is highly diverse and includes the interests of the angler, fishing related businesses, tourism operations and the many levels of government including First Nations. There has been a tendency for these groups to work more independently than together, depending on the issue, and the wide regional diversity of the freshwater recreational fishery further complicates interactions.

The freshwater recreational fishery has seen many changes in the last decade and a half; the next ten years will see even greater changes. Sport fishing businesses, angling groups, communities and governments must have a sound grasp of what this vital fishery is all about and the tools to plan and prepare for the future.

To more fully understand the realities and the potential of B.C.'s freshwater recreational fishery, the provincial government and the sport fishing sector have agreed to develop a Joint Government - Sector Strategy and Action Plan in an effort to maintain and develop the sport fishery and its economic and social benefits.

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[1] Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Fisheries (BC Fisheries) License Sales, 1989 - 1999

[2] DFO 1995 National Survey of Recreational Fishing In Canada.

The focus of this initiative is limited to freshwater[3] recreational fishing. The objectives are to:

- Create a better understanding of the freshwater recreational fishery;
- Set out a common shared vision for the freshwater recreational fishery;
- State strategic objectives to achieve the vision; and
- Provide a clear action plan identifying priorities, support activities and partnerships.

Working Towards a Strategy

The development of this Strategic Plan involves consultation among the freshwater recreational fishing sector, the provincial government, the federal government and regional and local governments. A Joint Government - Sector Steering Committee has been formed to oversee the development of the strategy, and six Working Groups have been formed to provide regional input at key stages in the process. Public representatives on these committees reflect the broad interests of the stakeholders. Open houses are being held in 12 communities. The intent of the sessions is to obtain from recreational anglers, sport fishing businesses and community members their vision for the sector and ideas as to how the sector and governments can work together to achieve that vision. A web site (**www.bcsportfishing.org**) and call free phone number (**1-866-471-1222**), provide access to the open house materials to the public beyond the 12 communities.

The Components of the Sport Fishery

There are essentially three components of the recreational fishing sector. The Fish resource, which combined with the natural setting, creates the sport fishing experience. The recreational angler seeking a sport fishing experience is considered the primary user. Businesses that cater to the recreational angler are regarded as secondary users. Governments play a key role in managing the resource and influencing the direction in which the sector evolves.

The Fish Resource

There are 24 freshwater sport fish, which are pursued by anglers within BC. The most popular of which are the rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, steelhead salmon and other trout. Other fish such as whitefish, sturgeon, bass, pike and perch are also sought. The freshwater fishery includes both wild and stocked populations.

Sustaining the Resource

Sustaining British Columbia's freshwater fish stocks requires continual and increasing management effort. Population growth and development activities will continue to place demands on the land base and water resource. These factors have the potential to impact seriously on fish habitats and their capacity to support the many difference species of fish.

Habitat protection is fundamental to the sustainability of the fish resource. Moreover, if sustainability of the fishery is truly a provincial objective, protection is always less costly than restoration, opportunity costs notwithstanding. For example it may be more costly to construct a bridge rather than a culvert, but the culvert will remove riparian cover on either bank of the stream. Also, culverts are notorious for limiting fish passage particularly of juveniles. In the long run construction of a bridge with preservation of the riparian cover and maintenance of the natural stream channel, may well be much less costly than having to retrofit and constantly maintain the culvert for fish passage.

[3] A Strategy for the Tidal & Anadromous Recreational Fishery was prepared in 1998.

The Recreational Angler — The Primary User

The fishing activity undertaken by the recreational angler creates significant economic benefits to the province of B.C., including revenue and employment. The expenditures generated by anglers vary considerably with the type of sport fishing experience:

- Anglers who pursue their own fishing experience and assume responsibility for their fishing gear, boat and fuel, overnight accommodation, meals and transportation;
- Anglers who purchase a sport fishing package which may include accommodation, meals, guide, boat, equipment and or transportation

Some general characteristics of the freshwater angler are:

- 80% are from B.C. and fish an average of 17.9 days per year within BC
- 9% are from the rest of Canada and fish an average of 8.6 days per year within BC
- 10% are from other countries and fish an average of 7.5 days per year within BC

Although the number of anglers has stayed relatively the same over the past 10 years the level of fishing effort (number of angler days) has increased by 11% for all anglers. This increase in effort was slightly higher, 16%, for Non-Canadian anglers. As well the expenditures derived from sport fishing packages has increased 117% over the same time period.

The recreational angler plays a key role within the sector and, therefore, must be a major contributor to the Strategy and Action Plan. The opportunity to go fishing and the expectation to catch a fish form the basis for the sport fishing experience. As well as the opportunity to be outdoors, relax and enjoy nature. There are many factors which alter the fishing experience including perceived or actual availability of the fish resource, catch limits, access to the resource, diversity of fishing experiences offered and cost to go fishing.

Sport Fishing Businesses — The Secondary User

Businesses, which cater to the recreational angler, reflect a wide range and diversity of sizes and services. They fall into two broad categories:

- Close to 1,000 businesses, which are directly dependent on sport fishing activity, including lodges, guides, tackle manufacturing and specialty retail shops. These businesses earn 50% or more of their revenue from sport fishing activities.
- Thousands of other businesses which are partially dependent on the fishery earning less than 50% of their revenue from sport fishing activities. These businesses include accommodation facilities, guide outfitters, marinas, transportation companies and boat companies.

Several factors affect the viability of the sport fishing businesses including international competition, a sluggish domestic or world economy, resource management decisions and a lack of government understanding about the needs of the sector. The Strategic Plan needs to address these concerns and propose innovative ways of operating within the changing environment.

Government's Role

Government policies directly influence the direction in which the sport fishing sector evolves. Decisions made regarding the management of the resource influence the opportunity and expectation to fish. This, in turn, will influence when and if the angler will go fishing. Government policies also influence the diversity of sport fishing experiences offered within the province. Regulations and guidelines can protect certain sport fishing experiences, and programs can encourage the establishment of new experiences. The table on the next page summarizes the various roles each government agency plays with respect to the fish resource, the recreational angler and sport fishing businesses.

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries – BC Fisheries is responsible for the overall co-ordination of fisheries policies, procedures and legislation and for ensuring the effective delivery of freshwater fisheries management and fish conservation programs. The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, is responsible for the regional delivery of freshwater fisheries programs in partnership with BC Fisheries, and the overall co-ordination and delivery of government's habitat protection, waste and water management programs. At the federal level, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is responsible for salmon habitat and the management and regulation of the salmon sport fishery in both tidal and freshwater.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND THE FRESHWATER RECREATIONAL FISHING SECTOR

Agency	Freshwater Fish Resource	Recreational Angler	Sport Fishing Businesses
MAFF	• Overall co-ordination of fisheries policies, procedures and legislation of fisheries management and conservation programs. • Provincial hatcheries and stocking program • Research	• Co-ordination of regulations for freshwater fisheries • Licensing of freshwater anglers • Policy development	• Industry development • Policy development

MELP	• Regional delivery of freshwater fisheries programs
	• Resource management
	  • stock assessment
	  • harvest management
	  • development and enforcement of regulations
	  • enhancement
	• Habitat protection and restoration
	• Water and Waste management
	• Research
		• Enforcement of angling regulations
		• Policy development
		• Parks provides areas for fishing
			• Enforcement of guiding regulations
			• Licensing of freshwater guides
			• Environmental requirements related to facility development
			• Crown land use policy
			• Foreshore use policy

DFO	• Habitat protection and management for salmon species • Research	• Licensing/Regulations of salmon species • Policy development • Research	• Communication • Small Craft Harbours
Tourism BC		• Marketing information on sport fishing	• Industry development
MSBTC		• Research	• Policy development • Representation at land use planning process and inter-agency initiatives • Research
MOF	Forest Practices Code Provisions	• Management of Forest Recreational Sites	
BCALC			• Lease and purchase of crown lands for fishing businesses
MOTH		• Transportation access of anglers	• Licensing of charters

MAFF: Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries – BC Fisheries, MELP: Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, DFO: Department of Fisheries and Oceans, MSBTC: Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, MOF: Ministry of Forests, BCALC: BC Assets and Land Corporation, MOTH: Ministry of Transportation and Highways.

Achieving the Vision

The challenge in creating a vision for the recreational fishery to which all can subscribe is significant and will require effective collaboration among all interests to achieve. These interests include those directly involved in sport fishing, communities which have an existing or future interest in sport fishing, the provincial and federal governments and concerned members of the public.

The Strategic Plan must have, at its cornerstone, a sustainable resource base. It must accommodate the aspirations of recreational anglers for access to the sport fishing experience and it must provide for the support and expansion of related business opportunities so critical to B.C.'s communities. It must also clearly identify action items that all levels of government and the sport fishing sector can work on together to achieve the vision.

The following are some initial directions in which the Strategic Plan could focus. In the enclosed survey you are asked to rank the importance of these factors.

Addressing the Requirement For Conservation

- Conservation is first, last, always. If there are no fish, there is no fishery,
- Address the need for habitat management, protection and enhancement.

Enhancing the Expectation and Opportunity

- Support a diversity of fishing experiences throughout the province.
- Support year round opportunities to fish

Enhancing the Quality of the Experience

- Ensure healthy fish stocks - enhancement, and habitat protection.
- Maintain wild fish stocks
- Maintain the natural setting

Enhancing the Quantity of the Experience

- Provide enough fish to sustain recreational demand and encourage growth in the sector
- Improve and increase access to fishing locations

Addressing the Government Mandate

- Meeting the needs for more information on the fish resource and fishery.
- Improve client services, i.e. licensing and enforcement
- Clear government accountability and adequate funding

Recognition and Cooperation

- The social, cultural and economic value of the recreational fishery fully understood and supported by government and the public.
- Coordination between government and sector on fishery issues
- Effective, funded and affordable consultation

Land and Water Resource Use Management

- Recreational fishing values must be considered in land and resource use planning processes
- In absence of credible data apply caution

Creating Economic Development

- Develop stronger economic growth related to recreational fishing and ensure that benefits flow to local areas.
- Support communities in their effort to increase benefits from sport fishing activities.
- Create opportunities to develop new and emerging markets, including new non-resident markets and BC resident markets such as family fishing

Thank-you for participating in this open house. Please complete the questionnaire, which was included with this hand out.

*If you know of any interested individuals who were unable to attend this session please let them know that they can complete the survey over the website: **www.bcsportfishing.org** or they can call 1-866-471-1222 to obtain a copy of the survey. **Please check in with our website to keep informed on this exciting sector – government initiative.***

Setting Direction For BC's Freshwater Recreational Fishery

Your Input is Important To The Process

Please take the time to complete this survey. Your ideas and comments will help to determine the future direction for the freshwater recreational fishing sector.

Please complete this survey before you leave the open house and drop it in the box when you leave. If you prefer to take the survey home to complete, please mail it to:

J. Paul & Associates, 4627 W. 8th. Ave., Vancouver BC, V6R 2A6, or fax to 604-222-4676, or you can complete the survey on our web site: www.bcsportfishing.org

Thank you for your input.

P.S. If there is insufficient space to give your answers please use a separate piece of paper.

A little Bit About You

1. Please indicate (✓) all categories that apply to you.

- ❑ Recreational Angler
- ❑ Involved with tourism business which caters to sport fishing
- ❑ Involved with sport fishing supply company
- ❑ Member of a sport fishing organization
- ❑ Government Representative
- ❑ Commercial Fisher
- ❑ First Nations
- ❑ Other, (please specify)

.....

2. What community do you live in? _____

3. How many days did you fish this year?

_____ Number of days river fishing (all species)

_____ Number of days lake fishing (all species)

_____ Number of days saltwater fishing (all species)

4. Please indicate if you purchased any of the following sport fishing services this year? (Please ✔ all that apply)

- ❑ Overnight at a freshwater sport fishing lodge
- ❑ Overnight at a saltwater sport fishing lodge
- ❑ Freshwater fishing guide
- ❑ Saltwater fishing guide
- ❑ Boat rental
- ❑ Marina
- ❑ Boat ramp

5. Do you have any comments on your freshwater sport fishing activity this year?

_____

_____

Setting Direction For the Freshwater Recreational Fishery

6. The following is an initial list of focus areas for the strategic plan. Please rank the level of importance that you feel should be placed on each of these areas over the next 5 years. At the bottom we have left space for you to add any areas, which you feel, are missing from this initial list. Please rank any areas that you add to the list.

Areas of Focus For Strategic Plan	Level of Importance				
	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Opinion
• Enhance Fish Conservation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Enhance habitat management and protection	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Support habitat enhancement/restoration	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Support a diversity of fishing experiences	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Support year round fishing opportunities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Maintain wild fish stocks	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Maintain the natural setting	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Maintain an abundance of fish to sustain recreational demand	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Provide for improved and increased access to fishing locations	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Increase the information base on the fish resource and fishery	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Improve client services, i.e. licensing and enforcement	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Clear government accountability and adequate funding	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Recognition of the value and importance of the fishery by government and public	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Coordination between government and sector on fishery issues	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Effective, funded and affordable consultation with sector	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Consideration of sport fishing values at all land use planning processes	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Develop stronger economic growth from the sport fishery	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Support communities in their efforts to increase benefits from sport fishery	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
• Create opportunities for new and emerging markets	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Please add your ideas	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
_____	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
_____	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
_____	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Your Ideas and Concerns For the Freshwater Recreational Fishery

7. What could be done within your region to improve the freshwater sport fishing?

8. Do you feel that your community is involved with the freshwater sport fishing sector? ❑ Yes ❑ No

9. What could be done within your community to gain greater benefits from the freshwater sport fishing sector?

10. Please provide any additional comments or ideas that you may have which could benefit the sport fishing sector within your area or for the province overall?

The Next Steps

- The survey responses from all 12 open house sessions and the website will be consolidated into a single report.
- Using the information obtained, a draft framework for the strategic plan will be prepared and reviewed by the six Working Groups and Steering Committee.
- A Final Draft Joint Government - Sector Strategic Plan will be made public in the spring of 2001 and you will have an opportunity to provide your thoughts on that document before its implementation.
- The Joint Sector Government Steering Committee will then endorse the Joint Strategic Plan.

Annex B: Open House Display Materials

Welcome

Welcome to this Open House

We are seeking your ideas and input on the future direction of the freshwater recreational fishery.

Please take one of the handouts provided below and follow the information panels around the room.

The handout provides you with more information on the panel topics.

Inside the handout is a questionnaire. We need your input and ask that you fill it in before you leave today.

There are resource people wearing name tags throughout the room who will answer any questions and discuss your ideas.

Thank-you ***for your contribution to the future of the fishery.***
The Steering Committee

Why This Initiative?

The Freshwater Recreational Fisheries are important to BC.

Recreational Fisheries in BC account for approximately $1 Billion in economic activity annually, divided fairly evenly between the freshwater and tidal activities.

In 1998 a strategy was prepared for the tidal recreational fishery.

The focus of this initiative is to develop a similar strategy for the freshwater recreational fishery.

Representatives of the recreational fishing sector and Government are working together to develop a joint strategic action plan to maintain and develop the fishery and its opportunities.

The objectives of this initiative are to:

- *Create a better understanding of the freshwater recreational fishery;*
- *Set out a common shared vision for the freshwater recreational fishery;*
- *State strategic objectives to achieve the vision; and*
- *Provide a clear action plan identifying priorities, activities and suggested partnerships.*

Creating The Strategy

Formation of the Joint Government/ Sector Steering Committee

Preparation of Draft Context Report
To describe the state of the recreational fishery

Workshops with Six Working Groups & 12 Open House Sessions
To discuss the future of the recreational fishery

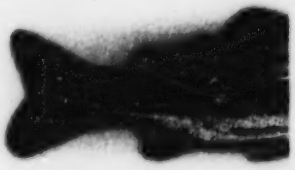
Draft the Vision, Goals and Objective
To create a framework for the Strategic Plan

Workshops with Working Groups and Steering Committee
To identify the actions needed to achieve the framework

Review of Draft Strategic Plan

Steering Committee Representatives Endorse Final Strategic Plan

Implementation and Assessment of the Strategy



Consultation

Consultation is a key step in the process to prepare the Strategic Action Plan.

- ***An Angler, Business, and Government Steering Committee***

Tasked to undertake and guide this initiative. The Steering Committee is comprised of the following members:

Sport Fishing Sector

- BC Wildlife Federation
- BC Federation of Fly Fishers
- BC Federation of Drift Fishers
- Trout Unlimited Canada
- Guide Outfitters Association of BC
- BC Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association
- Council of Tourism Associations of BC
- Fishing Manufacturers and Retail

Government

- BC Fisheries
- BC Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture
- BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
- Tourism BC
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada

First Nations Observer

- BC Aboriginal Fisheries Commission

Six Working Groups

Regional groups to assist the Steering Committee at key steps in the study process. Comprised of regional representatives of the associations and agencies represented by the Steering Committee.

12 Open House Sessions

Provide opportunities for anglers, businesses and communities to contribute to the development of the Strategic Plan.

Web Site - www.bcsportfishing.org

Provides access to the open house information and the survey to all residents of BC and to visiting anglers.

Please give us your ideas.

The Freshwater Recreational Fishing Sector

- **Average of 381,000 licensed freshwater anglers per year over past 10 years**
- **BC offers a diversity of sport fishing experience:**
  - 216,846 lakes
  - 789,363 Km of streams
  - 24 popular species of sportfish

What is critical to angler participation?

The opportunity to go fishing and the expectation to catch a fish.

The opportunity to be outdoors, to relax, and enjoy nature.

The Components of Sport Fishing Sector

- ***The Sport Fishing Resource*** - the fish that create the recreational fishing experience and the habitat that they live in.
- ***The Recreational Angler*** - the primary users who are seeking a diversity of sport fishing experiences.
- ***The Fishing Businesses*** - the secondary users that serve the recreational angler.

The Sport Fishing Resource

24 Most popular sportfish listed in 1999 - 2000 Freshwater Fishing Regulations.
Rich in Diversity and Distribution

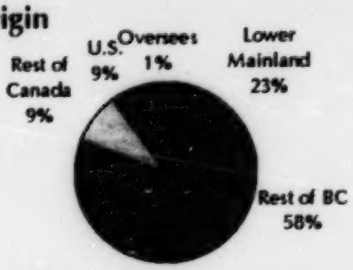
Sportfish	BC Environment Region								
	Vancouver Island	Lower Mainland	Thompson Nicola	Kootenay	Cariboo Chilcotin	Skeena	Omineca	Peace	Okanagan
Rainbow trout	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Steelhead	★	★	★		★	★			
Coastal cutthroat	★	★	★		★	★			
Westslope cutthroat			○	★					
Brown trout	○			★					
Dolly Varden		★		★		★			
Bull trout				★	★	★	★	★	
Lake trout					★	★	★		
Brook trout	○			★					
Kokanee	○		★	★	★	★	★		★
Salmon (in freshwater)	★	★	★		★	★		○	
Inconnu									
Goldeye									
Mountain whitefish		★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Lake whitefish					★	★	★		
Arctic grayling						★	★	★	
Burbot		○		★	★	★	★	★	★
White sturgeon						○			
Largemouth bass									
Smallmouth bass									
Black crappie									
Northern pike						★		★	
Yellow perch									
Walleye									
Crayfish	★	★	★	★	★				

Note: ★=frequent, ● = presence & ○ = rare

Who Are the Recreational Anglers?

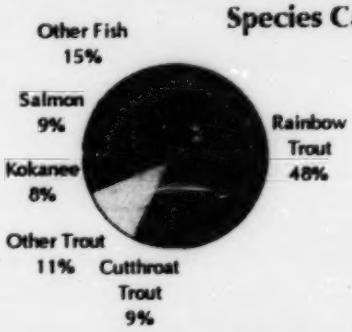
Characteristics of the Recreational Freshwater Angler

Angler Origin



In 1995 an estimated 10.9 million fish were caught and of these 3.3 million were retained.

Species Caught



Average Catch & Harvest By Origin

Angler Origin	Average # Days Fished	Catch Per Day	Harvest Per Day	Catch per Year	Harvest Per Year	Harvest as % of Catch
BC Residents	17.9	1.8	0.6	31.6	9.8	31%
Other Canadians	8.6	2.7	0.8	20.9	6.0	28%
Non-Canadians	7.5	3.2	0.8	22.9	5.9	26%
Total	16.1	1.9	0.6	29.7	9.0	30%

The top factors in choosing a fishing destination identified by freshwater anglers were:

- Lack of pollutants in fish
- Water quality
- Natural beauty of the area
- Lack of angler crowding
- Presence of favourite species

Regional Distribution of Angler Effort

Total of 6.3 million angler days spent in BC in 1995.

Distribution of 1995 Angler Days by Region

Region	%
Lower Mainland	18%
Thompson Nicola	16%
Kootenay	13%
Vancouver Island	12%
Cariboo Chilcotin	12%
Skeena	11%
Okanagnan	9%
Omineca	7%
Peace	3%
Total	**100%**

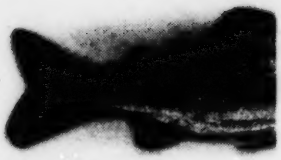
Quick Fact:

Anglers are spending more days fishing for freshwater species in BC.

- In 1995 the number of days anglers fish increased by 11% over 1985.
- Non Canadian angler effort increased by 16%.

** Statistics based from DFO National Survey conducted every 5 years.*

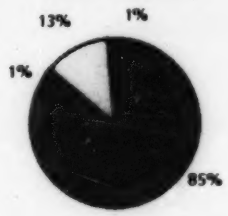
Regional Distribution of Angler Effort



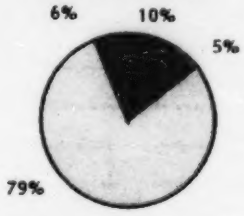
Distribution of Angler Effort By Origin:
Each region within the province has its own unique mix of anglers, consisting of anglers who live in the region, as well as other BC residents, Other Canadians and Non-Canadians (primarily US residents) who travelled to the region to fish.

Legend
- Region Residents
- Other BC Residents
- Other Canadians
- Non-Canadians

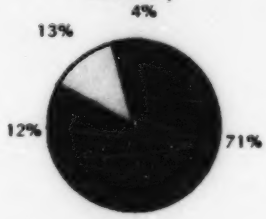
Lower Mainland



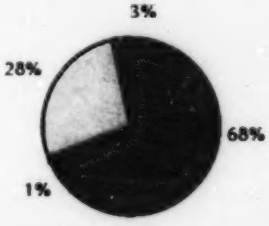
Thompson Nicola



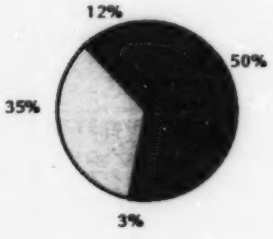
Kootenay



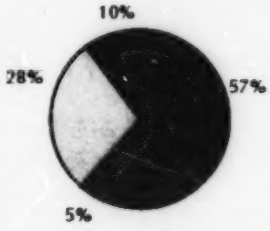
Vancouver Island



Cariboo Chilcotin

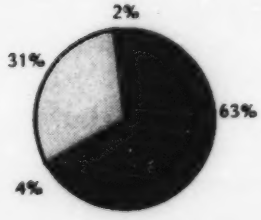


Skeena



Okanagan

Omineca



Peace

1995 Statistics based on National Survey conducted every 5 years.

Sport Fishing Businesses

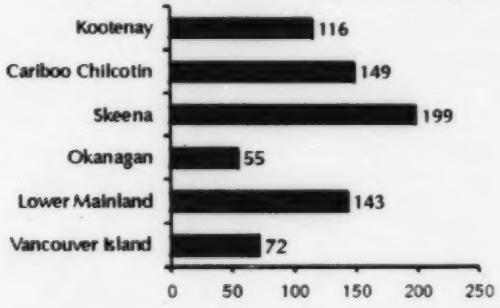
Businesses Directly Involved with Sport Fishing - 50% or more of revenue derived from sport fishing

- ***Sport Fishing Lodges*** - land based or floating vessels, offering a variety of sport fishing packages which may include accommodation, meals, guide, equipment or transportation.
- ***Angling Guides*** - often single person operations offering day trips and overnight trips.
- ***Retail and Manufactures*** - sport fishing supply stores, tackle, bait etc.

Estimate of Lodges

Region	# Freshwater Lodges	# Tidal Lodges
Vancouver Island & Lower Mainland	16	72
Thompson – Okanagan	66	
Kootenays	5	
Cariboo Chilcotin	26	15
Northern BC	36	40

Angling Guides and Assistant Guides



Businesses Partially Dependent on Sport Fishing - Less than 50% of revenue from sport fishing

- Over 1,000 businesses which offer services to anglers
- Accommodation facilities - hotels, motels, and campgrounds
- Guide Outfitters
- Marinas
- Air transportation companies (both chartered and scheduled services)
- Other transportation
- Boat dealers

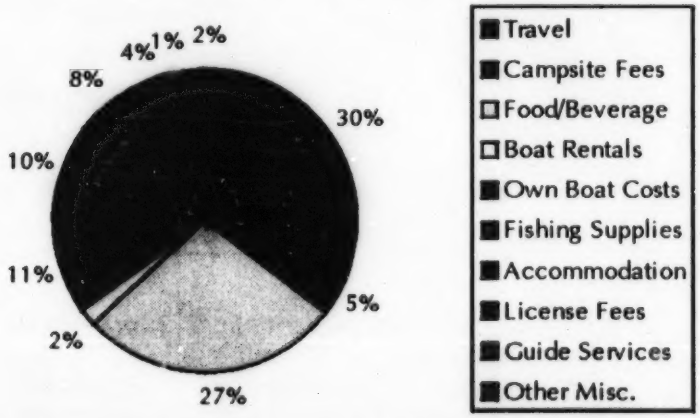
Contributing to the BC Economy

Freshwater sport fishing contributes significant expenditures, revenues and employment to the BC economy.

1995 Angler Expenditures

Total Angler Expenditures	**$494 Million**
Capital Expenditures *(fishing gear, boating and camping equipment, vehicles, land acquisitions and other)*	**$274 Million**
Direct Expenditures *(accommodation, food, travel, rentals, services and fees)*	**$207 Million**
Package Expenditures *(freshwater fishing packages purchased from a lodge, guide or outfitter)*	**$13 Million**

Direct Expenditures By Category



Government Revenues were $99 million in 1995 - Licenses and taxes

** Above statistics based on National Survey, conducted every 5 years.*

The Role of Government

- Government policies directly influence the direction in which the sport fishing sector evolves.
- These decisions can affect expectation and opportunity to fish as well as the diversity of sport fishing experiences.
- Regulations and guidelines can protect certain sport fishing experiences and influence the social and economic benefits realized throughout BC.

Government Agencies and Their Responsibilities:

- ***Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries*** - overall co-ordination of fisheries policies, procedures and legislation, and the delivery of freshwater fisheries management and fish conservation programs.
- ***Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks*** - regional delivery of freshwater fisheries programs in partnership with BC Fisheries, and overall co-ordination and delivery of government's habitat protection and water management programs.
- ***DFO*** - salmon habitat, management and regulation of the salmon sport fishery in both tidal and freshwater.
- ***Other government agencies*** - Crown land tenure, marketing, etc.
  Please see handout for further detail.

Role of the Angling Community

- ***Awareness Building*** - creating awareness within the public of the importance and benefits of freshwater recreational fishing
- ***Education and Ethics*** - working within the angling community
- ***Policy Direction*** - advising government of policy and regulations as they pertain to the fishery
- ***Creating A Common Voice*** - working together on common concerns
- ***Volunteer Labour*** - initiating and providing volunteers for the many enhancement and stewardship projects throughout the province

panel 13

The Role of the Community

Communities play a role in every sport fishing experience.

Regional Distribution of 1995 Expenditures

Region	% of Total Expenditures Within Each Category		
	Capital	Direct	Packages
Vancouver Island	8%	14%	>1%
Lower Mainland	45%	21%	3%
Okanagan	10%	10%	1%
Kootenay	11%	15%	5%
Cariboo Chilcotin	10%	14%	35%
Skeena	7%	13%	47%
Omineca	7%	9%	2%
Peace	2%	4%	6%

Community Involvement and Benefits

Many factors can influence a community's level of involvement with recreational fishing, which in turn, affects the level of benefits received.

- Stewardship and conservation
- Abundance & diversity of fish resource
- Ability to access areas from community (includes length of time and ease of access)
- Natural setting of the area
- Ability to access the community by road, air or water
- Number of visitors who pass through the community
- Number of businesses, which support the sport fishing experience within or nearby the community

Question to Consider:

How can communities increase their level of benefits from sport fishing activities?

****Above statistics based on National Survey conducted every 5 years.***

Trends in the Freshwater Recreational Fishery

The key trends are:

Trend	1985	1990	1995	1999
Number of Licensed Freshwater Anglers	314,262	351,095	400,570	347,405
Number of Juvenile Freshwater Anglers*	104,410	146,024	143,604	N/A
Angler Days*	5.7 million	5.3 million	6.3 million	N/A
Total Expenditures*	$303 million	$468 million	$494 million	N/A
% Male*	80%	82%	78%	N/A
% Female*	20%	18%	22%	N/A
Average Age*	44	44	46	N/A

Question to Consider:

How will these trends influence the future of freshwater fishing in the province?

** Statistics derived from DFO National Survey conducted every 5 years.*

Setting Directions For the Strategic Plan

Please use your dots to 'vote' on the most important areas for the strategic plan.

Place your dots here

Addressing the Requirement For Conservation

- Conservation is first, last, always. If there are no fish, there is no fishery
- Address the need for habitat management, protection and enhancement

Enhancing the Expectation and Opportunity

- Support a diversity of fishing experiences throughout the province
- Support year round opportunities to fish

Enhancing the Quality of the Experience

- Ensure healthy fish stocks - enhancement, and habitat protection
- Maintain wild fish stocks
- Maintain the natural setting

Enhancing the Quantity of the Experience

- Provide enough fish to sustain recreational demand and encourage growth in the sector
- Improved, and increased access to fishing locations

Setting Directions For the Strategic Plan

Continued

Please use your dots to 'vote' on the most important areas for the strategic plan.

Place your dots here

Addressing the Government Mandate

- Meeting the needs for more information on the fish resource and fishery
- Improve client services, i.e. licensing, and enforcement
- Clear government accountability and adequate funding

Recognition and Cooperation

- The social, cultural and economic value of the recreational fishery is fully understood and supported by government and the public
- Coordination between government and sector on fishery issues
- Effective, funded and affordable consultation

Land and Water Resource Use Management

- Recreational fishing values must be considered in land and resource use planning processes
- In absence of credible data apply caution

Creating Economic Development

- Develop stronger economic growth related to recreational fishing and ensure that benefits flow to local areas
- Support communities in their effort to increase benefits from sport fishing activities
- Create opportunities to develop new and emerging markets, including new non-resident markets and BC resident markets such as family fishing

The Next Steps

Thank you for taking the time to come to the open house and provide us with your ideas.

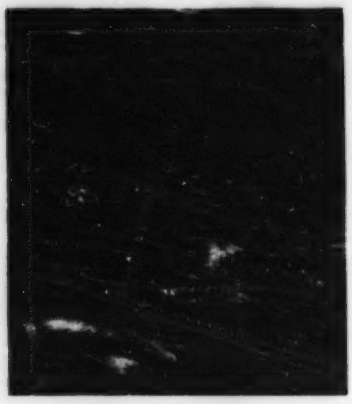
Please fill out the questionnaire and, drop it off at the door before you leave.

This session is one of 12 open houses being held throughout BC. Information received from these open houses and the web site will be consolidated into a single report.

This report will be used to draft a framework for the Strategic Plan. The framework will be reviewed and expanded by the Working Groups and Steering Committee to form a Draft Strategic Plan.

The Working Groups and Steering Committee will review the Draft Strategic Plan.

Final Joint Strategy and Action Plan will be made public in late Spring 2001 and you will have an opportunity to tell us what you think about it.



To keep informed, visit our website at www.bcsportfishing.org